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## THE CONTRIBUTION OF PROFESSOR HOWISON TO CHRISTIAN THOUGHT

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In a previous article in *The Harvard Theological Review* the writer presented an estimate of the contribution of Professor Royce to Christian thought.<sup>1</sup> In the present article he endeavors to do the same with respect to another American philosopher of great significance to Christian theology, George Holmes Howison.

Among American philosophers there is none perhaps whose conception of personality is so closely bound up with the Christian Ideal as that of the eminent protagonist of Personal Idealism, whose "original and lucid thought," as Professor George Herbert Palmer once said publicly of him, "will be a factor in shaping the philosophic judgment of our time."

If Professor Royce's contribution to Christian thought is "rich, profound, and extensive," that of Professor Howison—while it too is profound—may be characterized as exceptionally stimulating and illuminating. It offers in many respects an antithesis to that of the author of *The World and the Individual*, yet both help to bring out essential truths and values of Christianity.

It is neither the proper office nor the purpose of the writer to attempt an estimate of Professor Howison's philosophy as such. It is my less ambitious purpose to endeavor to set forth, so far as the limits of such a paper will permit, its relation to Christian theology.

One can hardly approach the task from this viewpoint without noting how largely the philosophy of Professor

<sup>1</sup> April, 1915.

Howison, like that of his contemporaries Professors Royce and James and Dr. William T. Harris, was moulded by the earnestly religious atmosphere in which he was reared. Brought up in a Christian home in Marietta, Ohio, he graduated from Marietta College and Lane Theological Seminary. Throughout his career as a teacher he has kept in close touch with the movement of religious as well as of philosophic thought and has brought his virile mind forcibly to bear upon the higher life of his time, especially upon the Pacific Coast. Coming to the University of California in 1884 he occupied for twenty-five years the Mills chair of Intellectual and Moral Philosophy and Civil Polity, becoming Professor Emeritus in 1909. Thus he became the founder of a real though unheralded school of philosophic thought upon the Pacific Coast which—however divergent its members may be from the system of the master—will continue to bear the impress of his ideals and of his personality. The “Philosophical Union” which he founded in 1889 has in its twenty-five years of vigorous life witnessed to the interest in philosophy which he created and maintained in Berkeley. His pupils occupy many of the leading chairs of philosophy in the universities and colleges of America.

It was in a theological atmosphere, as has been said, that he began his thinking. Stirred by religious problems, he found himself confronted with the demands of an intellectual life that had outgrown unyielding forms and demanded ampler and more adequate expression. To be at once philosopher and Christian required new wine-skins for the new wine which a severe mental discipline presses from the unfailing vintage of the enquiring spirit. A marked singleness and sincerity has characterized his thought. From the first he followed faithfully the white light of truth with unfaltering step. Certain clear and well-conceived truths have taken

shape in his mind; and these he has heralded and defended, expounded and amplified, with all the force and conviction of one who never turns back, never wavers, and never compromises. If Professor Royce's philosophy is a philosophy of loyalty, Professor Howison's is one—to use the term which he prefers to loyalty—of fealty. Sincere, undaunted, undefeated, he has maintained his principles against all comers and made himself heard far as the curse of philosophic doubt and obscurity is found.

Professor Howison came to Berkeley a Hegelian. To Hegel, as he said, he owed "many years of light and guidance."<sup>2</sup> But Hegelianism proved too indiscriminating and all-embracing for him. He saw that there are wrinkles in truth, like those in the California hills, that cannot be smoothed out, moral heights too great to be brought down to the level of mere monism, and chasms that yawn too deep to be filled in with complaisant developmentalism. A passing word of criticism upon a public address of his by an Oakland theologian brought his doubts to a focus and drove him to deeper foundations and the gradual construction of a system based partly on Kantian principles and having a certain resemblance to Berkeleyanism, but essentially his own. This system he has termed "Personal Idealism," or "Harmonic Pluralism." The latter term must not be allowed to confuse his system with empirical Pluralism and its universe of radically disjunct particulars, from which it is as far removed as possible.

His system of thought is clearly and succinctly set forth in his well-known volume *The Limits of Evolution*, published in 1901 and revised and much enlarged in a second edition issued in 1905.<sup>3</sup> The volume was received with an attention even more marked in

<sup>2</sup> *The Limits of Evolution*; Preface, p. xxvi. The citations are all from the second edition.

<sup>3</sup> A third edition is now in course of preparation.

Great Britain than in America. The *Athenaeum* found in it evidence of the "unquenchable energy" of American philosophy. The *Scotsman* regarded it as "singularly instructive and impressive," and Dr. McTaggart of the University of Cambridge spoke of it in *Mind* as a "most remarkable work." Besides this volume he contributed to, as well as edited, the volume *The Conception of God*, published in 1897. These two collections of writings, with a *Treatise on Analytical Geometry*, 1869, constitute the sum of his publications in separate books. To them should be added his address at the St. Louis Congress of Arts and Science in 1904, *Philosophy: Its Fundamental Conceptions and Its Methods*, printed in Volume I of the Publications of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition and several review articles upon educational as well as philosophical subjects.<sup>4</sup> He has been one of the associate editors of *The Hibbert Journal* from its foundation.

The best presentation of Professor Howison's contribution to theology may perhaps be made through three fundamental ideas which have been outstanding in his teaching,—God, Freedom, and Immortality. The earnestness of his emphasis upon this Kantian triad suggests the close kinship of his thought with that of Kant—an obligation which he himself freely acknowledges.<sup>5</sup> And yet, Kantian as he is, not only in the type of his thought but also in the temper of his mind and the strength of his emphasis upon duty, he is too good a student of Kant and too original a thinker to be merely a follower. He has his own interpretation and defences of the three great "postulates" in many respects in advance of those of the seer of Königsberg.

His Theism—to begin with that—is very definite and personal. God is conceived by him as the Perfect

<sup>4</sup> Especially noteworthy is a brief but striking paper on "The Origin of Concepts."

<sup>5</sup> *The Limits of Evolution*; Preface, p. xix ff.

Person, whose existence is capable of demonstration and whose relation to ourselves is that of Final Cause or Goal. In Him reason and will are one. He is the central member of the universal society of intelligences, or persons, an All-directing Intelligence "without encumbrances" and thus Perfect Love. "The worth of God is not in what He does," he declares, "but in what He is."

Conceptions of God that undermine or obscure the divine personality he confronts with all the weapons of reason and rebuke. Whether in the guise of Cosmic Consciousness or All-inclusive Absolute, these pantheistic conceptions seem to him to affront intelligence and to contradict morality. In the notable philosophical debate of 1895 at the University of California, he contended with force and skill against both of these tendencies. The first, as represented by Professor Joseph LeConte he met with the question: "So long as man remains a term in nature, how can he escape from that causal embrace in which Nature is held immanent in God?"<sup>6</sup> To the second, as advocated by Professor Royce, he advanced this objection:

"If the Infinite Self *includes* us all, and all our experiences—sensations and sins, as well as the rest—in the unity of one life, and includes us and them *directly*; if there is but one and the same final Self for us each and all; then with a literalness indeed appalling He is we, and we are He, nay, He is *I* and *I* am He. . . . Or, if we read the conception in the second way, what becomes of *Him*? Then, surely, He is but another name for *me*; or for any of you, if you will. And how can there be talk of a Moral Order, since there is but a single mind in the case? We cannot legitimately call that mind a *person*."<sup>7</sup>

This is but a single instance of the pointedness and vigor with which he has indefatigably challenged what he has been wont to call the "almighty mix" of the Hegelian conception of God in all its phases. "God,"

<sup>6</sup> The Conception of God; p. 117.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. pp. 98, 99.

he affirms, "is not an intermeddler; He is omniscient because He does not leave any other mind out. About the fate of every one He is intensely concerned; yet He respects the integrity and autonomy which is the sacred possession of each."

In uncompromising hostility to the philosophy of the unknowable, or agnosticism, to the Cosmic Consciousness of naturalism and to the Universal Self of monism,<sup>8</sup> Professor Howison has taken the field in behalf of the "Perfect Guide and Friend," the "Impersonated Love," of whom Jesus taught, the "Father in Heaven" who is Personal Perfection. The God who is thus the "Centre of reference," the "Living Bond" for all selves, is according to this view under moral obligations to other persons, just as they are to Him. Reciprocal personality, the "reciprocity of first causes"—for which there is no room in monism—is the only personality that is genuine:

"For the very quality of personality is, that a person is a being who recognizes others as having a reality as unquestionable as his own, and who thus sees himself as a member of a moral republic, standing to other persons in an immutable relationship of reciprocal duties and rights, himself endowed with dignity and acknowledging the dignity of all the rest."<sup>9</sup>

One of the chief obstacles to the understanding of the nature and reality of personality has been that it has been defined over against the world merely as the *not-self*, rather than in terms of its relation to other persons. Professor Howison has done much to correct this point of view.

The existence of this Supreme Instance, personally conceived, he regards as involving strict demonstrability. The demonstration may be formulated thus: The idea

<sup>8</sup> A most careful and illuminating discussion of the relation of the One to the Many may be found in Professor Howison's paper at the St. Louis Congress of Arts and Science, in which he contrasts the unity of harmony with that of absorption.

<sup>9</sup> The Limits of Evolution; p. 7.

of self involves in the last resort the idea of God, as the One Perfect Self by final reference to whom each self defines itself as imperfect or "finite." Every member of the republic of persons, though indeed defining himself against each of his fellows, must define himself, in ultimate logic, against the Supreme Instance, and so in terms of God.<sup>10</sup> Put in syllogistic form, the argument runs as follows:

"The *idea* of every self and the *idea* of God are inseparably connected, so that if any self exists then God also must exist; but any and every self demonstrably exists, for (as *apud Cartesium*) the very doubt of its existence implies its existence; and therefore God really exists." <sup>11</sup>

One of his most luminous and characteristic terms in defining the realm of persons—or "the city of God," as he calls it, with Augustine and the Stoics—is *recognition*. He uses it constantly and designedly to describe God's attitude toward other persons. The very perfection of God, he declares, "lies in his giving complete recognition to all other spirits."<sup>12</sup> What more than this simple act of recognition—one cannot but ask—is needed to assure us, upon our part, of His existence? Yet Professor Howison is not content with this, but constantly insists upon the necessity of rational *demonstration*. Such demonstration of God doubtless has its place and value, but the genius of Personalism gives it secondary rather than primary importance. Indeed we must not too hastily confound the Personal Idealism of Professor Howison with more spiritual forms of Personalism. It is throughout a philosophy of knowledge rather than of communion. In other words, it lacks the element of mysticism which, as it seems to me, is inseparable from a complete Personalism.

With what has seemed to many—perhaps to most—of his readers and pupils an inexplicable rigor, he has

<sup>10</sup> The Limits of Evolution; p. 355.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid. p. 359.

<sup>12</sup> See also Ibid. p. 258 ff.



maintained that God, being the final cause, cannot be the efficient cause, either of the natural universe or of the republic of persons. God cannot be the creator of persons, because every self is, he asserts, by the very nature of selfhood, a *causa sui*; its relation to God is a logical, not a material relation. Nor can the outer world be the creation of God. It is too unlike Him. Its very imperfection and evil, our author declared in an article in *The Hibbert Journal* discussing the disaster of Mont Pelée,<sup>13</sup> proves that it cannot be the work of a beneficent and omnipotent Creator. "It cannot be Eternal Love that bursts forth and scorches and suffocates from a Mont Pelée." Yet the world cannot be a *self-existent* material reality, for there is no such reality. "All existence is either the existence of *minds*, or the existence of the *items* and *order* of *their experience*."<sup>14</sup> No; the outer world is the creation, or rather the *derivative*, of all the minds other than God, acting together, the bad as well as the good. Hence the imperfection and evil manifest within it.

This critique of orthodox mechanical creationism is too forceful to be set aside. The question is, however, whether it does not deny too much—more than the author's own theory requires or warrants. He holds final cause to be "the originating and organizing member of the system of causes."<sup>15</sup> Why not then the originating cause of the selves? Indeed it is difficult to separate final cause and originating cause. Does not final causality carry with it origination? He who is our end can hardly be less than our origin also.<sup>16</sup> And yet, this insistence upon final causation is extremely pertinent. There is more occasion for the transference of emphasis from efficient to final causality than appears upon the surface. Whoever is concerned for the higher conception

<sup>13</sup> Hibbert Journal; vol. i, no. 1.

<sup>14</sup> Op. cit. p. xii.

<sup>15</sup> P. 365.

<sup>16</sup> A criticism of Dr. Howison's theory of creation may be found in Professor James Ward's well-known volume, "The Realm of Ends"; pp. 455-460.

of God can but approve the endeavor to reduce efficient cause "from that supreme place in philosophy which this has hitherto held and give the highest, the organizing place to Final Cause instead."<sup>17</sup>

But granted that Professor Howison's insistence upon the *priority* of final cause is right; is he warranted in denying all other causality to God? According to his own account, the world is derived from *minds*. Can it be then that it is the product solely of minds other than God? The growing conception of co-operant creation—according to which God is the origin and ground of a developing universe in which all minds, yes, all forms of life, have a subordinate but contributory part—fulfils the substance of his contention.<sup>18</sup> This creative agency increases in scope as the scale of being ascends toward selfhood. The self is thus chiefly responsible for the character (though not necessarily for the possibility) of its own existence.

The second cardinal principle of the system—freedom—is conceived and defended with all of its author's characteristic clarity of thought, skill of argument, and pungency of statement. Freedom, from his point of view, is grounded, not in the will as a faculty of the mind, but in the self, whose very nature it is to be self-existent and free. Underived, autonomous, inviolable (save by itself), according to personal idealism, is the self. It lays its own imperative upon itself. Complex, not simple, the self is yet a unit. "Every rational being is a self-referred being. Self-reference is of the very essence of reason." The self is impenetrable. He is full of scorn for what he calls "the glory in gregariousness" so rampant today. While not denying the mutual influence of the selves upon one another, he rejects the idea of interpenetration. Immanence he regards as inconsonant

<sup>17</sup> Op. cit. Preface; p. xvii.

<sup>18</sup> In fact, Professor Howison has himself, in one place at least, recognized this principle of creative co-operation (p. 199) which he elsewhere so explicitly rejects.

with personality. "No self can get into another and operate there. Neither the devil nor God can get into us. Nothing is more despicable than the idea that someone else is working in you." "Unless I am autonomous I can't be right."<sup>19</sup>

This recognition of the individuality of selfhood is as much needed as it is true to consciousness. Without the violation of freedom, however, the intimacy and potency of our personal relations, both with one another and with God, is such, it seems to me, as to require no less a term than immanence—used of course in a symbolic sense. Yet Professor Howison is no solipsist. Not less certain than the truth that the self is and must be a reality *in* itself is the complementary truth, of which he makes much, that the self is not and cannot be alone, by itself. Selfhood is social as truly as it is autonomous. "In thinking itself as eternally real, each spirit inherently thinks the reality of all other spirits."<sup>20</sup> Emphasis upon the social nature of selfhood is so strong as to remove personal idealism as far as possible from being bare individualism, radical egoism. It is as truly a social idealism as a personal idealism. The members of the Eternal Republic "exist only in and through their mutually thought correlation, their eternal 'City,' and out of it would be non-existent." Thus is personal idealism completely saved from solipsism. "A mind thinking 'I' inevitably correlates the thought *thou and they*." The very core of morality is to recognize other persons. "Righteousness is the faithful recognition of other persons as ends."<sup>21</sup>

<sup>19</sup> From notes taken at one of a series of informal talks upon philosophy given to a small group of his friends at his home in the spring of 1914. A number of other quoted statements are either from these talks or from private conversations.

<sup>20</sup> *The Limits of Evolution*; p. 353.

<sup>21</sup> It would be difficult to overstate this saving emphasis of Professor Howison upon Otherhood. He once said to the writer that he regarded the reciprocal nature of personality as the main factor in his philosophy. "Reciprocity might be taken as its one supreme watchword."

But freedom is not the only fact of experience. It is offset by determinism. How can freedom and determinism be reconciled? Professor Howison essays this Herculean task in his essay, *The Harmony of Determinism and Freedom*. It is impossible here to do more than allude to this closely wrought and remarkable piece of philosophical analysis. It must suffice to state that the solution of the problem is secured by the absolute exclusion of the idea of an external determinism imposed upon the soul either by nature or by God. Indeed, all the determinism we really know is resolvable into that law of definiteness which the rational mind itself imposes upon its experience. "Freedom and determinism are only the obverse and the reverse of the two-faced fact of rational self-activity. Freedom is the thought-action of the self, defining its specific identity, and determinism means nothing but the definite character which the rational nature of the action involves."<sup>22</sup> Whether this drawing of the fangs of determinism settles the great enigma or not, it certainly contributes to its solution a factor hitherto too far overlooked—the rationality of determinism as well as of freedom.

Side by side with the truths of God and Freedom Professor Howison places Immortality. From his confidence in the truth and supreme significance of Immortality this defender of the dignity of the soul never for a moment wavers. In an age of hesitant non-committalism such a rational confidence is reassuring. For it rests upon no mere sentimental desire or vagrant imagining, but upon a conviction that has been matured by long reflection and that has weathered many seasons of besieging question and popular dismay.

The essay entitled "Human Immortality" in *The Limits of Evolution*, consists of a clear exposition and brilliant criticism of Professor James's Ingersoll lecture

<sup>22</sup> Op. cit. p. 375.

on Immortality, in which the *brain transmission* theory of the latter is taken up at precisely the point at which it begins to lose value and cogency and is carried forward into an application which redeems it from the vague impersonalism in which James leaves it. In place of the immortality of a differentiated "Mother Sea of consciousness," Howison offers us the definiteness of a genuinely personal and ethical individual immortality. The argument may appear to some to pause too long over the theory of parallelism, but as a matter of fact, the discussion of the theory of parallelism is but incidental to the main argument, which is based upon the "imperishable self-resource of the individual spirit."<sup>23</sup>

The argument turns largely upon proving time to be "a consciousness *a priori*; that is, an act of the soul, of the individual mind, in the spontaneous unity of its existence."<sup>24</sup> This established,

"our discussion in proving Time to be an expression of each mind's spontaneous activity, proves the self-active existence of every mind as such, and so establishes the eternity of the individual spirit in the only ultimate meaning of eternity; since, as the ground and source of Time itself, the being of the soul must transcend time, though including time."<sup>25</sup>

From this point the argument moves on to include space and cause as trophies of the immortal soul:

"Thus we conclude to the dependence of Nature upon *us*, taken in our primary and active being, instead of our derivative dependence upon Nature. In the place then of death's ending *us*—death, but one item in the being of the natural world, the whole of which is conditioned upon the central self-consciousness—we arrive at the settled and logically immovable conception that we are ourselves the changeless ground of that transition in experience into which death thus gets interpreted."<sup>26</sup>

This conception of immortality manifestly involves,

<sup>23</sup> Op. cit. p. 308.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid. p. 304.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. p. 301.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid. p. 306.

as does his entire theory of personality, the super-existence of persons. This is not pre-existence, nor is it to be construed as in any way involving metempsychosis or transmigration in any form. It is rather an affirmation of the essential superiority of the soul to time, a protest against the incongruous notion that as persons we can have a beginning in time. If time is in any sense a postulate of the mind itself, it is indeed incongruous to think of the soul as having a beginning in that which has no existence apart from the mind's own activity. One can be born into the already existent time-world of other minds, but so far as the individual is concerned time takes its rise in him rather than he in time. As a matter of fact, the time concept is seen, upon careful thought, to be in itself irrelevant to the idea of the origin of the spirit. The term "pre-existent" as applied to the soul is as irrelevant as time-existent. The only strictly relevant issue here is that between the self-existence of the soul and its existence as deriving from the Supreme Person. I find myself, as I have already indicated, unable to follow Professor Howison in ascribing self-origination to human persons. Consciousness seems to me to witness to a receptive-active process by which finite personality comes to be what it is—a process of continuous appropriation from a personal source. This may be called an eternity-process rather than a time-process, in that it has no direct relation to time.<sup>27</sup> Yet this difference of interpretation does not modify the real force of the argument for immortality here presented, nor leave it less than one of the noblest and most impressive utterances upon this theme which Philosophy has put forth.

At a time of uncertainty and readjustment in Christian thought this philosopher of trained mind and clear vision

<sup>27</sup> By "time" as here used is meant, not Bergson's "*la durée*," which suggests the idea of eternity, but time in the sense of "the fleeting world of phenomena." See Professor Howison's address at the St. Louis Congress, p. 185 ff.

has produced what he has called a "new apologetic," whose profoundly Christian character and cogency have not yet been realized. This new apologetic was admirably set forth (under the questionable term "rationalism") in the address before the Congress of Religion in San Francisco in 1894.<sup>28</sup> He presents it as not only rationally demonstrable but as clearly taught by Jesus. It is a predominantly ethical apologetic. The ethical note is, in fact, dominant in all his teaching,<sup>29</sup> lending it a reality and virility which have given to his classroom in Ethics and to all his contact with his friends and with the community a wholesome atmosphere of tonic sincerity. Indeed, this spirit of integrity and of fealty to the ideal have made his personality a tower of strength and an example of uprightness of inestimable worth to all who know him. In his devotion to Duty he resembles Kant. "You cannot read Kant," he once said to a company of teachers of philosophy, "without a conviction of sin. You should not live too much with any book that does not induce this in you."

Fault-finders have maintained that there is no place in this system for the great Christian doctrines of regeneration, the Holy Spirit, and atonement. If it were a system of theology instead of a philosophy, this might be a just criticism. The recognition of the mystical and revelatory nature of truth is indeed somewhat lacking in the system, which sometimes gives the impression of clear, cold intellectualism. Yet there are many passages in *The Limits of Evolution*, especially in the essay on "The Art-Principle in Poetry," not only full of profound insight but rich in æsthetic and spiritual feeling. The author's sense of the creative nature of art, of "joy in the ideal," and his sympathetic

<sup>28</sup> "The Right Relation of Reason to Religion," *The Limits of Evolution*; p. 217 ff.

<sup>29</sup> Dr. McGiffert recognizes this in his survey of Howison's philosophy in his recent volume, "The Rise of Modern Religious Ideas"; pp. 231-233.

appreciation of Emerson evince this intuitive and imaginative spirit. The term "intelligence," which he most frequently employs to designate the organ of truth, conveys the impression of truth-discovery as a purely intellectual and ratiocinative process; but a more careful study of his use of "intelligence" discloses the fact that he intends by it "primarily moral cognition." Indeed, in the address upon "The Right Relation of Reason to Religion," he states that he means by reason "the human powers of insight in their completest scope, and not merely the faculty of 'reasoning,' or consistent and consecutive syllogizing, or 'explaining' and 'proving' in this mechanical sense."<sup>30</sup> He also speaks with approval of the evidence of personal experience, "the evidence not of mere reasoning, but of the large and deep rational nature as a whole."<sup>31</sup> Such words are to be taken, not as in any sense disparaging the logical faculty or the function of demonstration, of which he is the unflinching champion, but as showing the breadth and depth of his conception of our intelligence, which he has always contended is of the same generic nature as that of God Himself. "The infinite of the soul is mightier than the finite in it."<sup>32</sup>

Another serious misunderstanding of Professor Howison, on the part of certain objectors, has been the notion that he underrates the Bible. It is a superficial conclusion, drawn chiefly from his thorough sympathy with the method and results of Higher Criticism, the pathway which for so many modern minds has led to a new and deeper appreciation of the Bible, both as literature and as doctrine of life. In a speech at a dinner given in honor of Dr. Henry Van Dyke at the University Club in San Francisco, he declared with earnestness: "I certainly deal with the Bible in my classes, and I will never cease until the Regents compel me"; and that

<sup>30</sup> *Op. cit.* p. 231.<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.* p. 265.<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.* p. 373.



could only be—as all his friends knew well—by the compulsion of removal. The mind of Paul is, in most respects, especially congenial to him, with the exception of the Rabbiniism, and what he regards as the ambiguous declaration in the Mars Hill speech—"For in Him we live and move and have our being"; which he thinks (if really Paul's and not Luke's) has been naturally taken as pantheistic, though probably not so intended by Paul. The doctrine of election he regards as essentially foreign to Paul, declaring that if Paul should return, he would exclaim, "How in the world did you get that doctrine of election from me?"

If at times in combative moods and upon occasions in which it has seemed to him to be his duty to hew the Agag of unthinking orthodoxism in pieces, he has shown an excessive aggressivism, at other times, especially in smaller circles, he speaks with a calm, an eloquence, and an insight that have earned for him among his friends the reputation of being one of the most fascinating and impressive of conversationalists, an American Coleridge with less of the rhapsodical.

So convinced and thoroughgoing an idealism as that of Professor Howison stands in sharp contrast with the questioning, inconclusive doctrinaire philosophy now in vogue. It gives him in these his ripened years a certain Socratic character. One is aware that he has convictions—of whose reality and worth he is so sure that he would fain make you, also, sure of them. This imparts to him too an atmosphere, not of aloofness from the events occurring about him but of a genuine elevation above them, as if he were regarding them *sub specie eternitatis*. When he remarks, for instance, that "history is a succession of fits, out of which man comes with pain and suffering," one realizes that this is not quite the sort of observation that he hears from the man on the street. The calm though serious opti-

mism of the thinker invests him, revealing the reasoned foundation upon which his every-day thought and life are built. With the timid and hesitant character of so much modern thinking he has no sympathy, declaring that we have no business to be so unstable and unsure. He admits the presence of perplexities, but affirms that "all our uncertainties are embosomed in certainties."

The published material constituting Professor Howison's contribution to religious thought, though small, is exceedingly significant. It is a treasure of refined gold. It may be doubted if anyone in the field either of philosophy or of theology has so clearly and firmly apprehended or so succinctly and enduringly stated that central truth of Christian philosophy—the determinative reality and complete mutuality of personality.

The indebtedness of the philosophical and theological world to the philosophy of Professor Howison is far greater than is generally understood. Indications of the impression it has made upon thoughtful minds can hardly have escaped the attention of the observant reader of recent English and American philosophy and theology. This influence, though it may not be fully recognized for a long time, is almost certain to continue and to deepen.

Divested of some of its more extraneous polemic and contemporary features, *The Limits of Evolution* (the title is too limited) presents, as Professor Caldecott has said, "a powerful brief for the ethical type of theism," and is not unlikely to become a classic of idealistic and Christian philosophy, standing as one of the luminous achievements among the philosophic interpretations of the life of the spirit. It has a certain maturity and conclusiveness that cannot fail to beget conviction and deepen assurance in the great abiding realities of God and the soul. When Philosophy takes itself in as high and serious a spirit as in the case of Professor Howison,

fronting the great issues of life and truth with an earnest and courageous freedom, it can hardly fail to throw light upon the true character and mission of Christianity. For Christianity is no narrow creed for despairing minds. It is as deep as the human soul and as wide and varied as are the boundless needs of man.

“The aim of such a religion is not merely to ‘glorify God’; rather it is to glorify all souls, as all in the image of God; to glorify them by fulfilling for every one of them its vocation to repeat in a new way the life of universal love that is the life of God, and thus to attain, through the universal greatening, such a real glorification of God as other religions seek after in vain.”<sup>33</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Op. cit. p. 255.